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Letter dated 28 October 1997 from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee to the Chairman of the First Committee

I wish to draw your attention to the concerns raised repeatedly by the delegations of the Fifth Committee both during formal meetings and informal consultations at the current session of the General Assembly regarding the tendency of substantive committees to involve themselves in budgetary and administrative matters.

In this connection, I should like to refer to section IV of General Assembly resolution 45/248 on the procedures for administrative and budgetary matters, whereby the Assembly reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters, as well as the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. In the same resolution, the Assembly expressed its concern at the tendency of its substantive committees and other intergovernmental bodies to involve themselves in administrative and budgetary matters.

Further, rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly states:

> "No resolution involving expenditure shall be recommended by a committee for approval by the General Assembly unless it is accompanied by an estimate of expenditures prepared by the Secretary-General. No resolution in respect of which expenditures are anticipated by the Secretary-General shall be voted by the General Assembly until the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee) has had an opportunity of stating the effect of the proposal upon the budget estimates of the United Nations."

Accordingly, when a Main Committee is about to adopt a draft resolution involving expenditures recommended for approval by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General submits a statement of programme budget implications. It goes without saying that the primary responsibility of your Committee, in respect of

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the consideration of a statement by the Secretary-General on programme budget implications, is to review the programmatic aspect of it, leaving the consideration of the financial aspects to the Fifth Committee.

Taking into account the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and General Assembly resolutions 41/213, 42/211 and 45/248, by which the Assembly reaffirmed the role of the Fifth Committee as the competent Main Committee that considers all reports of the Secretary-General with the administrative and financial implications and the related reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, I would appreciate it very much that, in the course of your consideration of any proposal, the financial aspects be left aside for the appropriate and necessary decision of the Fifth Committee.

I should be grateful if the above concerns and necessary clarifications are brought to the attention of your Committee and taken into account in your deliberations on draft proposals.

(Signed) Anwarul Karim CHOWDHURY